

Rep Rick Larsen
Questions for the Record
Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee hearing
7/23/14

USCG Vice Admiral Peter Neffenger

Q: When will the Coast Guard come to a final decision on what to do with the Polar Sea?

Navy Rear Admiral Jonathan White

The Navy's Arctic Roadmap released this year recommends the establishment of an Arctic Center of Excellence, which would result in the development of an Arctic engagement plan focused on partnerships with other stakeholders in the region, both public and private. I understand that the House Appropriations Committee recently endorsed this approach as well.

Q: Can you talk about what the Center of Excellence would work on, and what the Navy is looking for?

Q: When will the Navy make a decision on where this Center of Excellence will be headquartered?

Ambassador David Balton, Department of State

Ambassador Balton, in May the Government Accountability Office issued a report that the United States has not prioritized its commitments to the Arctic Council and that a lack of an organizational Arctic head has limited the administration's efforts to coordinate the many agencies that deal with Arctic issues. The report also stated that the State Department only has two employees working on Arctic policy full time, which seems rather sparse given our chairmanship of the Arctic Council is coming up next year.

Q: What is the administration doing to respond to the GAO findings?

Q: Is it true that only two employees at the State department work on these issues? Does your agency have the resources necessary to engage in this work in a substantive way?

Rick Larsen